

### THE RUMOR ABOUT THE C. I. A.

A large number of Frenchmen are convinced that agents of the United States Central Intelligence Agency played a part in encouraging the recent mutiny by French generals and professional troop units in Algeria.

French suspicions were kept alive by the French Government's week-long silence. Finally on Friday Foreign Minister Maurice Couve de Murville expressed confidence in United States good will but stopped short of any declaration on the truth or falsity of the rumors themselves.

Two messages from President Kennedy to President de Gaulle, the first offering unlimited American support, the second, warm congratulations on the victory over the mutineers, and categorical denials of American involvement by responsible United States officials have failed thus far to quell the rumors.

The origin of the rumors is obscure. They were circulating by word of mouth on Saturday, April 22, within hours of the outbreak of the mutiny. They apparently first appeared in print in *Izvestia* in Moscow and subsequently made their way into such respected French newspapers as *Le Monde*.

Several factors served to keep them alive, among them the failure of responsible French officials to issue a clear-cut denial. The attention focused on the C. I. A.'s role in the Cuban fiasco perhaps suggested the agency as a target. The fact that former General Maurice Challe, leader of the mutiny, had spent a year in a major Atlantic Alliance command and shared American displeasure over President de Gaulle's resistance to NATO orthodoxy gave the charges a certain surface plausibility. So did the report that the C. I. A. was fearful of a Communist take-over in Algeria if President de Gaulle carried out his intent to give the country independence.